

North Dakota

LEGENDARY



2003-2008 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan



The State of North Dakota 2003-2008 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

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Introduction

The 2003-2008 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is the seventh edition of the plan first prepared in 1970 by the State Outdoor Recreation Agency, now the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department. The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is a guide for managing and developing North Dakota's recreation needs, future recreation priorities and determining the awarding of Land & Water Conservation Fund assistance.

This document is the result of long hours of dedication and a think tank of professionals and members of the public. Thank you to the members of the recreation profession, on both a state and federal level for their input and insight. As well thank you to concerned citizens for their attendance at the meetings and their assistance in this process. This document would not be an accurate representation of the recreation needs in North Dakota without the input received.

There are two external issues currently at issue with planning processes undertaken by agencies in the state. Out migration and the emphasis on the tourism industry have taken front stage in conversations in North Dakota. Recreation has a great impact on both of these issues and therefore this plan incorporated their importance throughout the process.

The recent focus on out migration in rural areas has a major impact on the state of North

Dakota given the large number of rural communities. As well, the state is still seeing a large number of young adults moving out of state to start their careers. Both populations have expressed recreation as a major component to keeping them in the region.

The state is also experiencing exploding growth in the tourism industry. Our open landscapes, rich history, and abundant non-consumptive and consumptive recreational opportunities make the state a unique destination for travelers. Keeping these diverse needs in balance is a delicate task and one that requires great cooperation and resources.



Process and Methodology

Previous revisions of the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan have made little consideration of the planning processes undertaken by the political subdivisions within the state as a means of determining recreational needs in their area. As administrators of the Land & Water Conservation Fund the North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department would be failing to work cooperatively with these agencies and ineffectively by mirroring the planning processes already commissioned. This revision took the opportunity to explore those future plans by employing focus groups of political subdivision representatives and citizens in eight public forums.

Each forum included representatives from recreation agencies and public participants. The session was started with a presentation on the research undertaken by the Division of Tourism and the American Recreation Coalition's research study entitled Outdoor Recreation in America 2000: Addressing Key Societal Concerns. The participants listed their recreation needs they saw in the future for their area. The entire group, to produce the needs as presented in this report, rated these recreation needs by priority. This research has shown that 78% of Americans

participates in some form of outdoor recreation at least once per month. The research also detailed the various types of activities and the level of participation by the American public.

Federal Agency Cooperation

During the course of the planning process a meeting specifically for Federal agencies was held to discuss the work they were undertaking in the next five years for outdoor recreation. The main emphasis of these agencies was a cooperative effort to provide the best possible recreation opportunities. This includes construction of new recreation sites, reconstruction or relocation of existing recreational sites, and the development of long-term recreation plans for their management areas.

One example of the cooperative efforts is the United States Geological Survey’s sharing of vital gaging station information for use by canoeists and kayakers for current water level updates. In the future they are planning on also sharing real time water quality information, which has grown to be of concern amongst recreation enthusiasts.

State Recreation Priorities

The purpose of this planning process is to identify outdoor recreation issues of statewide importance, to evaluate demand for public outdoor recreation, and to evaluate the supply of outdoor recreation resources. The number one priority for the Land & Water Conservation Fund is the acquisition of land for conservation or as part of a public recreation resource. North Dakota has a fair amount of publicly held land with the Little Missouri National Grasslands and the Sheyenne National Grasslands in addition to state held lands but there is need for land for recreational facilities, such as golf courses and campgrounds.

The state is broken in to eight legislative planning regions used universally by state agencies during planning processes. Therefore, in addition to developing overall state priorities each region has developed priorities and grant awards will be based on the priorities by the region of the project. Some of the priorities include multiple micro areas, such as golf courses to include junior courses, traditional courses and disc golf courses. In addition, sports courts include traditional sports courts like basketball and tennis, as examples, but more prominent is the need for skateboarding parks.

North Dakota Recreational Priorities
Trails
Sports Courts
Playgrounds/Picnic Areas
Pools/Beaches
Golf Courses
Sports Fields
Campgrounds
Support Facilities
Historic Parks

REGION 1

Region 1 includes the counties of Divide, Williams, and McKenzie and is the home to the North Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park, the Little Missouri National Grasslands, and the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri River.

The region is served by its largest city, Williston. Additional points of interest within the region are Lewis and Clark State Park, Fort Union National Historic Site, Fort Buford State Historic Site, and Writing Rock State Historic Site.

Region 1 has 4.3% of the state's population with 27,514.



Recreational Priorities

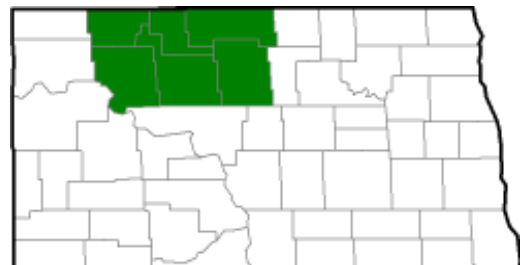
Golf Courses
Sports Courts
Theme Parks
Trails
Pools/Beaches
Playgrounds/Picnic Areas
Campgrounds
Water Access

REGION 2

Region 2 is the counties of Burke, Renville, Bottineau, Montrail, Ward and McHenry and has the Mouse River and the Turtle Mountains.

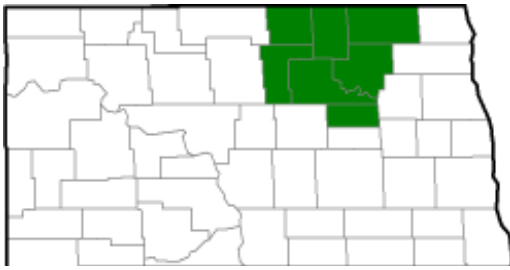
The region's largest city is Minot, the home of the North Dakota State Fair. Additional points of interest within the region are Lake Metigoshe State Park, Lostwood National Wildlife Refuge, Des Lacs National Wildlife Refuge, Upper Souris National Wildlife Refuge, J. Clark Salyer National Wildlife Refuge, and the David Thompson State Historic Site.

Region 2 has 12.8% of the state's population with 81,301.



Recreational Priorities

Pools/Beaches
Trails
Sports Courts
Playgrounds/Picnic Areas
Golf Courses
Water Access
Sports Fields



REGION 3

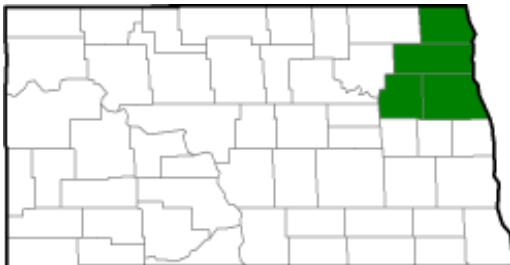
Recreational Priorities

Winter Sports Facilities
Trails
Sports Courts
Campgrounds
Water Access
Open Space Parks
Renovation of Existing

Region 3 holds the counties of Rolette, Towner, Cavalier, Pierce, Benson, Ramsey and Eddy and is the home to the International Peace Gardens, Devils Lake and the Pembina Gorge.

The region is served by its largest city, Devils Lake. Additional points of interest within the region are the Devils Lake State Park System, Lake Alice National Wildlife Refuge, the geographical center of North America, Fort Totten State Historic Site, and Sully's Hill National Game Preserve.

Region 3 has 7.4% of the states population with 47,170.



REGION 4

Recreational Priorities

Playgrounds/Picnic Areas
Pools/Beaches
Trails
Support Facilities
Sports Courts
Sports Fields
Public Use Areas
Historic Sites
Campgrounds
Golf Courses

Region 4 consists of the counties of Pembina, Walsh, Nelson and Grand Forks and has the Red River of the North and some of the greatest wildlife watching opportunities in the state.

The region's major cities are Grand Forks, Grafton, Caviler and Walhalla. Additional points of interest within the region are Icelandic State Park, Turtle River State Park, and Gingras Trading Post State Historic Site.

Region 4 has 13.9% of the states population with 88,442.

REGION 5

Region 5 has the counties of Steele, Traill, Cass, Ransom, Sargent, and Richland. The region holds the Red River Valley and the Sheyenne River Valley as well as the Sheyenne National Grasslands.

Region 5 includes the state's largest city, Fargo as well as other centers of Wahpeton, West Fargo and Lisbon. Additional points of interest with in the region are Fort Ransom State Park, Tewaukon National Wildlife Refuge, Maple Creek Historic Site, and Fort Ransom State Historic Site.

Region 5 has 25.6% of the states population with 162,442.



Recreational Priorities

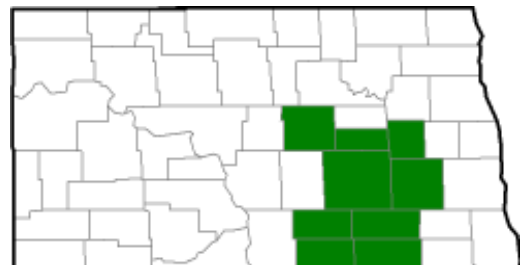
Historic Parks
Trails
Sports Courts
Playgrounds/Picnic Areas
Sports Fields
Support Facilities
Pools/Beaches
Golf Courses
Campgrounds
Pet Parks

REGION 6

Region 6 is the counties of Wells, Foster, Griggs, Stutsman, Barnes, Logan, LaMoure, McIntosh and Dickey. Region 6 boasts the state's only National Scenic By-way.

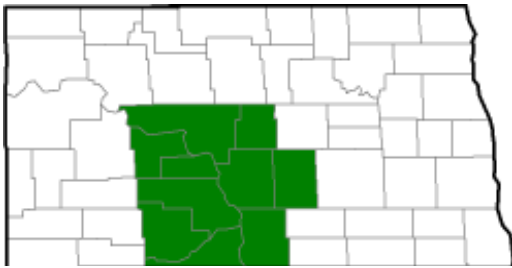
The region largest cities are Jamestown and Valley City. Additional points of interest with in the region are Beaver Lake State Park, Doyle Memorial State Park, Arrowood National Wildlife Refuge, Baldhill Dam, Camp Atchison State Historical Site, Whitestone Hill Battlefield State Historical Site and the Stutsman County Courthouse State Historical Site.

Region 6 has 9.4% of the states population with 59,927.



Recreational Priorities

Trails
Playgrounds/Picnic Areas
Campgrounds
Support Facilities
Sports Fields
Sports Courts
Golf Courses
Amphitheaters
Pools/Beaches
Pet Parks



REGION 7

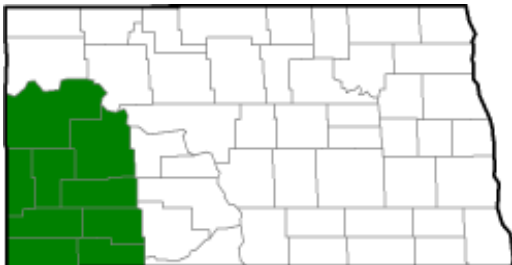
Recreational Priorities

Trails
Playgrounds/Picnic Areas
Sports Courts
Golf Courses
Passive Recreation
Renovation of Existing
Water Access
Sports Fields
Pet Parks
Community Gardens
Pools/Beaches

Region 7 holds the counties of McLean, Sheridan, Mercer, Oliver, Burleigh, Kidder, Morton, Grant, Sioux and Emmons. This region holds the southern section of the Missouri River, the Garrison Dam, the eastern section of Lake Sakakawea, Lake Audubon and Lake Oahe.

The region includes the state's capitol, Bismarck, as well as other centers of Mandan and Washburn. Additional points of interest within the region are Lake Sakakawea State Park, Fort Stevenson State Park, Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park, Cross Ranch State Park, and Long Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Region 7 has 20.5% of the states population with 130,174.



REGION 8

Recreational Priorities

Sports Fields
Pools/Beaches
Historic Sites
Golf Courses
Trails
Support Facilities
Sports Courts
Playgrounds/Picnic Areas
Amphitheaters

Region 8 includes the counties of Dunn, Golden Valley, Billings, Stark, Slope, Hettinger, Bowman and Adams. The Little Missouri National Grasslands, Theodore Roosevelt National Park and the Little Missouri Scenic River occupy this area.

The region is served by its largest city, Dickinson. Additional points of interest within the region are Sully Creek State Park, Little Missouri State Park, the historic city of Medora, Killdeer Mountain Battlefield State Historic Site, Lake Ilo National Wildlife Refuge, Schnell Recreation Area, and Chateau De Mores State Historical Site.

Region 8 has 5.9% of the states population with 37,529.

TRAILS

Trail systems are being constructed at a feverous pace and for good reason, North Dakota has seen dramitic increases in trail use in the last ten years. Many communities master plans include trail systems for recreation and transportation. The construction of trail systems will continue to be a top priority for North Dakota.

The biggest encumbrance to constructing trails is the cost. Most paved trails have a high material costs and non-paved trails have a high amount of man-hours involved to design and construct a lasting, safe and ecologically friendly trail. The assistance provided by the Recreational Trails Program and the Land & Water Conservation Fund for the construction of trails is vital to communities continuing with their current trail plans.

One of the newest trails added to the system is a 96-mile non-paved multiuse trail in western North Dakota that has drawn national attention of mountain bikers, hikers and horseback riders. The Maah Daah Hey Trail was made possible by cooperative efforts of federal, state and private landowners. There are plans under way currently to extend a second trail southward from the south trailhead to make the overall trail system more than 150 miles. Many other land managers and trail advocates in the state are looking closely at this model to establish similar trail systems in their area.

North Dakota is also one of the trailheads for the North Country Trail that runs from North Dakota to New York traversing 7 states. A portion of the trail has been completed in the state but there are connector segments that need to be completed or taken from back roads, which now serve as the trail.

The state has a 3800-mile snowmobile trail system. This system is funded in part by dollars collected from registration fees and gasoline tax. It is by far the most used and best managed motorized trail system in the state. Keeping the trail system groomed and in safe riding condition is always a challenge giving the day-to-day weather conditions.



Multiuse Trails

Paved
Non-Paved

Non-Motorized Trails

Walking/Hiking
Nature/Historic
Mountain Biking
Horseback Riding
Canoe/Kayak

Motorized Trails

Snowmobile
Off-Highway Vehicles

WETLANDS

Choteau Region Counties

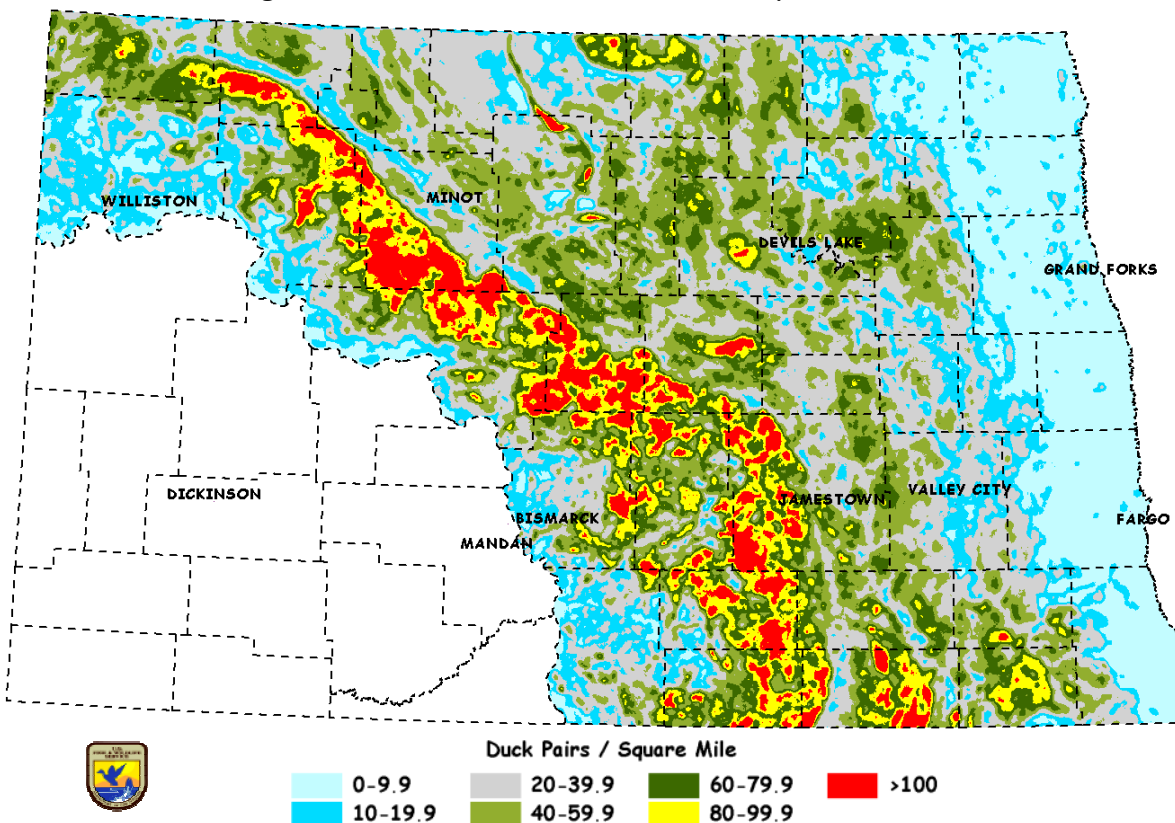
Divide
 Burke
 Williams
 Montrail
 Ward
 McLean
 Sheridan
 McHenry
 Wells
 Burleigh
 Kidder
 Stutsman
 Logan
 McIntosh
 LaMoure
 Dickey
 Ransom
 Sargent
 Richland

North Dakota is a major hub along the migratory path of wetland birds. Conservation of those wetland areas are of great importance to the state. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service is the lead conservation agency serving the state in conjunction with the state Game and Fish Department. The primary focus of wetlands conservation is the choteau region of the state. This region represents the area where the last major glacier movement crossed the state.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service has done extensive research on those areas that provide productive breeding grounds for wetland birds. In the choteau counties, areas with higher breeding densities are high priorities for conservation easements and acquisitions.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department rounds out the conservation effort with state conservation areas, refuges, and wildlife production areas.

Breeding Duck Pair Distribution and Density in North Dakota





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